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Return to Summer

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Chapter 1 by Dana Busby

When I was a kid there were this commercials for Ball Park hot dogs, "It's not summer yet," kids swimming in a pool, "It's not summer yet," lady tanning in her back yard, "Not yet!" boys playing baseball, "NOW it's summer," Michael Jordan grilling Ball Park hot dogs on a Weber grill.

I have a similar "It's not summer yet," milestone: every year I would spend July with my grandparents. This may sound like the lamest thing every, but it's not. They live on a crystal clear lake in northern Minnesota and it is really magical. No really, it is. Until last year, it was just a really fun place to go in the summer. I would go fishing with my grandpa, bake pies with my grandpa, and drive the little speedboat across the lake to visit my friend Sam. That was enough for me, I couldn't get enough of my daily routine, my rotation of swimsuits. It was perfect.

Last summer Sam and I were exploring in the woods behind my grandparents' house. We came across a grouping of ancient looking headstones. There were five of them. Two said "Mother" and "Father" and the others had names and dates that were too faded to read. We had a gory fascination with these headstones. We visited them every day. Sometimes we would pretend to be mourners of the family, bringing flowers for the graves. Sometimes we would pretend to paranormal researchers, looking to document the presence of ghosts.

Then one night we decided to go to the graveyard after dark. On this night we were in the mood to be mediums, with the ability to communicate with the dead.

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